



When A Religion Is Dead, It Becomes Ritualistic

Talk: Osho

Religion deteriorates into rituals. When a religion is dead, it becomes ritualistic. When a religion is alive, it remains spontaneous. If you want to pray, let it be spontaneous. Don't repeat rituals; otherwise it is futile, it is meaningless, you are wasting time. If you get up every day – a particular time, a particular prayer, a particular way to do it, and you repeat it in a mechanical way, you will never come to know what prayer is.

Prayer has not really to be done. It has only to be allowed. Sitting silently, looking at the trees, suddenly it is there. Sometimes it comes; sometimes it does not come. It is not within your power to drag it. A prayer dragged is no longer prayer. Prayer is like love: sometimes it is there and sometimes it is not there. And you are helpless; you cannot do anything about it when it is not there. You can

pretend. You can show that you are very loving and you know deep down there is no love. And if you get accustomed to this, by and by you will forget what real love is.

If you watch you will see sometimes like a breeze it comes. Right now there is no breeze and the trees are silent. What can they do? They wait. When the breeze comes they will dance. They don't have a ritual. They don't say, "Now it is morning and it is time to dance, and where is the breeze?" And if it is not coming, "Then we will try on our own – we will do some yoga posture, we will perform some ritual, we will do some exercises and somehow sway." No, they don't bother. They wait. Look, they are waiting. When the breeze comes they will dance. Prayer is like that: it comes. It comes without ever giving you any indication that it is coming.

So remain available. Sometimes sitting in your bed in the night, suddenly it is there – the whole room becomes full of some unknown presence. Not that you can do anything about it. It is there. You can enjoy, you can be joyful, you can delight in it. You can dance; the breeze

has come. You can sway, you can sing a song.

And let that song also be of the heart, of this moment. There is no need to repeat anything from somebody else. There is no need to cram anything. There is no need to repeat the Christian or the Hindu prayer. They are all false. The real prayer simply arises. Sometimes it may be silent. You may

not say anything, not even a thank you. The ways of love are very mysterious – and existence will understand.



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Let your prayer be very spontaneous. If anger is there, what else can you offer to him? Offer anger. If love is there, offer love. Godliness is nothing but a tremendous understanding that existence shows towards you. But if you are false, then you are trying to deceive, and you cannot deceive existence. That is not possible. You can deceive only yourself. And you will go on piling up deceptions upon deceptions around you, and you will be choked, suffocated in your own deceptions – you will die under the burden of your own deceptions.

Just be wherever you are, and be true and be authentic and be spontaneous. From 'Ecstasy: The Forgotten Language', Courtesy Osho International Foundation, www.osho.com.

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